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ABSTRACT

On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) is a program targeting children (4-9 years) in danger of academic failure and their families. Major components of the program are age- and individual-appropriate development learning activities, professional development, curricula aligned with initial and ongoing assessments from prekindergarten through the primary grades, and classroom activities integrated with teacher-guided parent activities at home. This report summarizes program development activities and relevant evaluation studies designed to determine whether each program goal was achieved. Part 1 summarizes studies demonstrating sustained program effects. Part 2 relates development and evaluation of the effects of the EPSF holistic approach to the needs of educators implementing kindergarten and first grade components. Part 3 describes development of authentic assessments and the study of mixing qualitative and quantitative data. Part 4 relates implementation of key program elements to positive evaluation outcomes. Part 5 describes annual studies of kindergarten student data and relates them to EPSF staff development and the leadership training process. The migrant study is also reviewed. Attachments include (1) "Holistic Approach to Program Implementation and Evaluation"; (2) "Permanent Transition Records for Learner-Centered Schools"; (3) "Linking Developmental Program Assessments"; (4) "A Framework for Dovetailing Children's Assessments"; (5) "Kindergarten Classroom Monitoring Checklist"; (6) "First Grade Classroom Monitoring Checklist"; (7) "EPSF Reading Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale"; (8) "EPSF Standards and Descriptors to Assist Teachers Assessing Writing Progress"; (9) "EPSF Writing Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale"; and (10) "Student Profile (computer-generated)." Contains 31 references and 7 tables. (LSH)

ED 395 659

# On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure

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## Summary of Nationally Validated EPSF Program Development and Evaluation Goals and Studies Submitted to ERIC in 1995

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SHARED WORK

Before any program research report can be written, data must first be generated by parents and students. Raw data must then be assembled and organized by trained teachers and administrators. The third step is to review, submit, and analyze the data. Finally, the reports need to be disseminated to participants. This process has been followed repeatedly for annual studies, longitudinal studies, and for other program-generated reports.

We are indebted to certified trainers, parents, students, teachers, and administrators for the steady stream of data they have provided through the years.

Our special appreciation is extended to Debbie Davis, who, as research assistant, helped to review annual and longitudinal quantitative data and submitted accurate collections to external program evaluators.

Paul Thistlethwaite, Ph.D., Analyst, Western Illinois University, and Kathy McKean, Ph.D., Educational Program Evaluation, Oklahoma, gave us active support, thoughtful commentaries along the way, and rewarding feedback described in terms such as *statistically significant* and *effect size*. Our newest challenge is to add *educationally meaningful* to qualitative data analyses. Their sustained interest and patience gave us the strength and encouragement to develop our ideas further and to learn *what works and what doesn't work* for EPSF.

Numerous reports of annual and longitudinal study results, including this summary, could not have been produced, formatted, and revised through multiple drafts without the patience, capability, and talents of Gerry Randell, word processor and layout specialist.

While program studies are designed to examine our theory and practice, they are significant and important to participants for the purpose of aiding them in making specific kinds of decisions. Laurey Davies, EPSF Materials Coordinator, takes responsibility for distribution of reports seriously.

Adopters always receive caring and careful attention from all office staff whether they are ordering materials, having a problem, or have questions about procedures for submitting data.

The final version of this report was reviewed and critiqued by a number of interested colleagues including national consultants Pat Bryant and Tommie Touchstone and program evaluators Paul Thistlethwaite and Kathy McKean.

My contribution as author of this summary report grew out of about twenty years of stimulating and energetic *shared work experiences, collaboration*, and the rich and satisfying process of learning. We have had a great teacher, Luceille Werner, who has brought leadership, pleasure, and excitement to our shared endeavors.

*Phyllis Betz*

## PREFACE

We have submitted this unpublished document to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC, Nov., 1995) and are currently making copies available to keep our adopters and our broad audience of interested educators and parents informed and updated. ERIC's archival function - - documents are *always* in print - - will solve the availability problem when our supply of resource materials, research reports, etc. has been exhausted. There is another very concrete advantage. Submission of a document to ERIC reduces the overall likelihood of overlap, redundancy, and duplication of efforts by our colleagues engaged in early childhood education research. We hope that results reported in the documents will be used by grant writers, program adopters, professional researchers, and school districts assessing their needs for a comprehensive early childhood program for all children but especially targeting the needs of children at-risk.

This is the first of many research reports, program and product descriptors, evaluation studies, instructional materials, teaching guides, curriculum materials, assessments, etc. we will submit to ERIC in the coming year. As they are submitted, they will be made available to interested adopters and others who can also retrieve bibliographic descriptions developed by ERIC.

We included in this 1995 summary of our program evaluation studies, a profile of the essential elements of each of the program components - - prekindergarten through the primary grades. The bottom line for each of the evaluation studies is the *effect size* computed by external evaluators. These will prove edifying to faithful adopters.

On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) is an early childhood program. The prekindergarten component is a model for technical assistance to prekindergarten teachers, parents, and administrators. It is play oriented and stresses the importance of careful observation. The kindergarten component is designed for all children chronologically age 4.5 to 6.5 years specifically. It is designed to target the needs of developmentally diverse students needing an age- and individual-appropriate learning environment. The primary grade component is designed for older children, chronologically and/or developmentally, but specifically, children still at-risk of achieving academic success in the primary grades. District programs vary (primary nongraded, pull-out, transitional, conventional, and others). The EPSF program is designed to be adaptable and flexible within the parameters of the validated essential elements and depending upon the assessed developmental needs of the child, district/state curriculum mandates, budgetary restraints, etc. The program's holistic approach - - staff development, the alignment of program curriculum innovations, keeping transitional records, linking developmental program assessments - - encourages interrelationships among preschool caregivers, public school prekindergarten, kindergarten, and primary grade teachers and parents.

While ideas presented in these documents do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the U.S. Department of Education, the National Diffusion Network, the Illinois State Department of Education, nor the Peotone School District 207U, we are grateful for their sponsorship of our program.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Acknowledgements | i |
| Preface | ii |
| List of Tables | iv |
| Abstract | v |
| Introduction | 1 |
| I. Sustained program effects demonstrate academic success for at-risk students | 2 |
| II. The holistic approach to aligning curricula with assessments, prekindergarten through the primary grades, is effective for improving student achievement | 8 |
| III. Mixing qualitative and quantitative data is appropriate for ongoing student assessment and for measuring the impact of the EPSF program on student achievement | 10 |
| IV. The implementation of key program elements is essential for improved student achievement at adoption sites | 11 |
| V. Annual statistical analysis of program effects will demonstrate improved kindergarten student achievement and reduced retention rates | 13 |
| Bibliography | |
| Product Descriptors | |
| Attachments: | |
| A. Holistic Approach to Program Implementation and Evaluation | |
| B. Permanent Transition Records for Learner-Centered Schools | |
| C. Linking Developmental Program Assessments | |
| D. Framework for Dovetailing Children's Assessments | |
| E. Kindergarten Classroom Monitoring Checklist | |
| F. First Grade Classroom Monitoring Checklist | |
| G. EPSF Reading Checklist and Rating Scale | |
| H. EPSF Standards and Descriptors to Assist Teachers Assessing Writing Progress | |
| I. EPSF Writing Checklist and Rating Scale | |
| J. Student Profile (computer-generated) | |

LIST OF TABLES


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| Table 1. | Demographics for Kindergarten Samples . . . . . | 17 |
| Table 2. | Comparison of Annual Study Samples with Total Population . . . | 17 |
| Table 3. | Kindergarten Assessment Instruments . . . . . | 18 |
| Table 4. | Percentage of Participating Districts Demonstrating Strategically Significant Differences between Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores for Children At-risk (Age Equivalent Scores 1989-92 and Standard Score Equivalents 1992-95) . . . . . | 20 |
| Table 5. | SSE Pretest and Posttest Means and Difference Scores for the PLS, PPVT, DAP, and VMI . . . . . | 20 |
| Table 6. | Demographics: Ethnic Background and Socioeconomic Status of At-risk Student Samples . . . . . | 22 |
| Table 7. | Summary of Effect Sizes of Annual At-risk Samples . . . . . | 24 |

## ABSTRACT


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EPSF was founded in 1972 by Luceille Werner who, as National Director, has demonstrated leadership, ongoing educational program development proficiency, dissemination expertise, and positive program evaluation results through the years. Nationwide groups of public and private early childhood classroom teachers and school administrators are the primary participants in the development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of the EPSF program for all children age 4 to 9 years. Children at-risk of academic failure (prekindergarten through primary grades) and their families are targeted with greater emphasis because they are most affected by inappropriate educational programs. Improved student achievement is a major outcome of the program. At-risk kindergarten program students, on average, catch up with their peers in second grade. Retention and transitional classrooms in the primary grades can be avoided. Major components of the program are professional staff development workshops; age- and individual-appropriate developmental learning activities; curricula aligned with initial and ongoing assessments from prekindergarten through the primary grades; and child- and teacher-initiated classroom activities integrated with teacher-guided parent activities at home. The primary goals of the EPSF program evaluation component are to find out whether: **(I.) Sustained program effects demonstrate academic success for at-risk students. (II.) The holistic approach to aligning curricula with assessments, prekindergarten through the primary grades, is effective for improving student achievement. (III.) Mixing qualitative and quantitative data is appropriate for ongoing student assessment and for measuring the impact of the EPSF program on student achievement. (IV.) The implementation of key program elements is essential for improved student achievement at adoption sites. (V.) Annual statistical analysis of program effects will demonstrate improved kindergarten student achievement and reduced retention rates.**

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to summarize program development activities and relevant evaluation studies that were designed to find out whether or not each goal was achieved. Each of the five parts of this paper summarizes program development and evaluation activities relevant to these five goals. In part I, recent early childhood studies from a review of the literature are related to today's children's educational needs. Program studies that demonstrate sustained program effects are summarized. Related program development activities to meet these needs are described. In part II, the development and evaluation of the effects of the EPSF holistic approach is related to the needs of educators implementing the EPSF kindergarten and first grade components. In part III, the development of authentic assessments and the study mixing qualitative and quantitative data are described. In part IV, the careful implementation of key program elements is related to positive evaluation outcomes. In part V, annual studies of kindergarten student data are described and related to the EPSF staff development and leadership training process. Also, the migrant study is reviewed.

Currently there is a number of EPSF related documents in ERIC. They are of historical value, but none meets our criteria for relevance, significance, or timeliness. In other words, they are outdated. Over the past twenty years, the focus of our EPSF program has evolved and expanded to include prekindergarten, kindergarten and the primary grades. For this reason, EPSF developers are eager to submit to ERIC this updated document to be followed by adopter evaluation studies, teacher resources, student assessment procedures, reliability and validity studies, etc. We want our adopters and other interested persons to draw valid meaning from our program sponsored studies; grant writers to have knowledge of our program development, implementation and evaluation process; and district administrators, assessing their needs for an early childhood program, to have evidence of program effectiveness.

SUMMARY OF NATIONALLY VALIDATED
ON THE WAY TO SUCCESS IN READING AND WRITING WITH EPSF
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION GOALS AND STUDIES

I. **Sustained program effects demonstrate academic success for at-risk students.** The following excerpts from a review of the most recent and relevant literature (McKean, 1995) support the need for a valid early childhood program that responds to research on *how children learn*: The National Association for the Education of Young Children indicates that given the nature of children's development, "the curriculum in the early grades must provide meaningful contexts for children's learning rather than focusing primarily on isolated skills acquisition" (1990, p.22). Piaget's research on children's cognitive development led him to the conclusion that children learn through observation and experiences with novel stimuli. They incorporate new information into their world views, thereby constructing new knowledge. He believed that learning forms the mind, rather than furnishing it. This constructionist approach is diametrically opposed to the traditional approach to learning wherein children "are empty vessels, needing to be filled with appropriate knowledge, and that knowledge is generated elsewhere, outside of the learner" (Levin, 1994, p. 12). The younger the children, the more they learn through interactive processes versus passive, receptive processes. They should be exposed to informal versus formal learning. "As children grow older, their capacity to benefit from formal, whole-group instruction increases. However, when a single formal method of instruction is used for a group of children *diverse* in background, experience, language, aptitudes, interests, and developmental rates, a significant proportion of the group is condemned to fail" (Katz, 1992, p.5). If we wish to meet the needs of all of America's children, including the poor, the minority, the culturally different, those who speak English as a second language, and the children

of the middle and upper classes, the traditional classroom curriculum and expectations for children in the early grades must respond to the research on how children learn.

The primary purpose of conducting studies of student achievement as a major outcome of the educational program, On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF), is to demonstrate that at-risk program students on average catch up to their peers in second grade with age- and individual-appropriate developmental instruction in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and the primary grades. Retention in the primary grades can be avoided. The EPSF benchmark educational programs can be used and maintained as a system to achieve an holistic approach (see attachment A.); to focus on children at-risk from prekindergarten through third grade; to meet national education goals; to activate parental and community involvement; to provide opportunities and materials for parents training in home-teaching techniques; to enhance and develop the social capacity of families and the school; to provide the classroom teacher with skills and knowledge to make it possible for identified at-risk children to read and write successfully; to *avoid retention in the early primary grades*; to meet the educational needs of *all* America's young children diverse in cultural backgrounds, opportunities to experience success, socioeconomic status, aptitudes, interests, and developmental rates.

National Validation by the Program Effectiveness Panel, U.S.D.E., National Diffusion Network (1985-1990).[1] As a result of their participation in the On the Way to

1. The United State's Department of Education's National Diffusion Network funds stringently evaluated educational programs validated by the Program Effectiveness Panel (PEP) to be disseminated throughout the United States and its territories. The *demonstration site* is the original site of the validated program. The *adopter site* is that of the school or district that implements and evaluates the outcomes of the essential program elements after staff development workshops are conducted by national, state, or local certified trainers.

SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) program, a cohort of 137 at-risk students followed from kindergarten through second grade made significantly higher achievement gains than a comparison group of their average peers (28) and two norm groups (national samples) of students with similar characteristics (Thistlethwaite, 1990). The program students began in kindergarten scoring two or three standard deviations below the mean on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). These students were considerably at-risk, yet, **by the end of their second grade year, they could not be distinguished from their typical or average peers on the basis of test scores.** (PPVT effect size was 59.3%. For the ITBS, the effect size was one full standard deviation above the comparison groups.) Researchers concluded that the EPSF program improved student achievement (McKean, 1990). The program is unique in its holistic approach to implementation, alignment of assessment components with curricula, comprehensiveness of training activities for adopter staff development, and generalizability of its outcomes for avoiding retention in the early primary grades. [2]

Program-sponsored Longitudinal Study 1992-1996. [3] The current longitudinal study is designed to demonstrate whether or not (1) cost benefits are derived from avoiding retention in kindergarten and the early primary grades; (2) one of the effects of the program is an increase in student achievement when curricula, staff development activities, teaching practices, parent training, plus initial and ongoing

2. Primary external statistical evaluators for the PEP validation study (conducted from 1985 through 1988, submitted and validated in 1990) were Paul Thistlethwaite, Ph.D. and Kathy McKean, Ph.D.. Phyllis Betz, National EPSF Certified Trainer and EPSF Evaluation Specialist, searched the literature, prepared the report for submission to PEP, and coordinated the study with participating adopters in cooperation with many other external specialists and under the direction of Luceille Werner, National Director of EPSF.

3. The current Longitudinal Study is being conducted by Luceille Werner, EPSF National Director; Patricia Bryant, EPSF National Consultant; Tommie Touchstone, EPSF National Consultant; and Debbie Davis, Research Assistant for EPSF. Paul Thistlethwaite, Ph.D., is conducting statistical studies of the data. Kathy McKean, Ph.D. is Program Evaluation Consultant.

assessments are aligned, integrated, and mutually supportive (holistic approach); (3) a positive correlation exists between qualitative and quantitative measures of sustained program effects; and (4) adopters' self-evaluations of their fidelity to the essential elements of the program correlate with program effectiveness.

In Year I of this K-3 Longitudinal Study, a sample of at-risk kindergarten program students with **identified developmental learning needs**, demonstrated statistically significant improvement on four standardized instruments when pretest and posttest mean standard scores were compared (McKean, Thistlethwaite, 1993). The major demographics of the longitudinal study sample were similar to those of the 4,616 students in the 1992-93 kindergarten annual study (level of risk, ethnic background, age, gender, and socioeconomic status) and the national census (age, ethnic backgrounds). Almost 66% of the children were from the lowest socioeconomic group in each of the participating school communities. *A higher percentage of high-risk children was in the lowest socioeconomic group.* The average amount of special teacher time spent exclusively on program activities per week was 126 minutes (142 minutes for high-risk and 115 for moderate-risk).

Writing Study. A national writing study was conducted during Year I of the Longitudinal Study. The purpose of this study was to develop standards and descriptors to assist teachers in assessing student growth in writing. Seven distinct levels were identified using samples from regular kindergarten and first grade classes plus one *gifted kindergarten class* (Touchstone, 1993). Instructional practices were not controlled but all writing samples were collected based on specific criteria and with specific instructions for collecting data. Kindergarten and first grade ranges overlapped as was expected. As a result of this study, a descrip-

tive tool was developed to be used in conjunction with the EPSF Writing Checklist for teachers to observe and to detail each child's ongoing progress in kindergarten and first grade. (See attachment H.)

Year II of the Longitudinal Study (1993-94). First grade raw data were reported for 212 students from 15 schools in 9 districts and seven states. Standardized tests were administered. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT), Level R, is a measure of beginning reading achievement which helps identify each child's strengths and weaknesses in the use of letter-sound correspondence and the use of sentence context. Also, the Standardized Reading Inventory (SRI) was administered. The SRI is a criterion-referenced device that can be used to establish a child's level of mastery of reading materials. The SRI was administered as a valued measure of performance. The program-developed Reading Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale was administered by teachers as an authentic assessment of each child's ongoing progress. Results will be correlated with the SRI. The raw scores from the program-developed Writing Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale will be administered as an authentic assessment and will be correlated with National Writing Samples from the National Writing Study (Year I, 1992-93) conducted by program consultants and adopters. The statistical correlations are intended to be a comparison of qualitative and quantitative data to be reported in the 1996 application to PEP.

As children move through the primary grades, additional comparisons will be made: Prepost comparisons on measures of reading achievement (Gates-MacGinitie); project-developed performance assessments; prepost comparisons on project-developed measures of writing; and norm-referenced (Normal Curve Equivalent) comparisons with children served through Chapter I (the largest program for

improving children's reading skills) (McKean, 1994). Rates of retention in kindergarten or placement in some type of transitional program will be compared to studies reported in relevant literature.

Developmentally delayed children need more time to *catch up*, more varied materials and activities for effective learning, and more opportunities to experience success. Teachers need inservicing in effective teaching and management skills. Parents need to know how they can effectively support their child's classroom instructional program in school and at home. Administrators need to know how to provide support and facilitate change. School board members need to know how to encourage and support school reform.

Based on recent research findings that demonstrated that retention in the early grades doesn't work, components of the program are designed for all children, especially *at-risk* students, their teachers, and parents. All prekindergarten, kindergarten, and primary grade level teachers, school administrators, and any interested persons in the community may participate in inservice seminars.

Prekindergarten Assessment. The development of one easy-to-administer authentic assessment instrument to assist teachers making educational plans for 4 year-old children was encouraged by teachers. The Individual Developmental Early Assessment (I.D.E.A.) instrument is based on the developmental characteristics of today's young children and includes a series of comprehensive developmental scales that sample a range of sequential behaviors in the language, cognitive, and pychomotor areas (Werner, 1994). Children are assessed as they perform a variety of play activities and the meaning of each child's performance is considered in terms of the total functioning of the child. Norms include percentiles,

normalized z scores, stanines, Standard Score Equivalents (SSE) and T scores for language, cognitive, fine motor and gross motor assessments (Thistlethwaite, 1994). The results of this children's assessment instrument are recommended for *educational planning purposes only.*

II. **The holistic approach to aligning curriculum with assessments, prekindergarten through the primary grades, is effective for improving student achievement.** [4] (See attachments A and B.) Every young child develops his or her capacity for survival and appreciation of culture in developmental play activities at home and in prekindergarten child care centers. (1) Access to high quality and developmentally appropriate prekindergarten programs helps children prepare for school, maintain mental alertness, and develop healthy minds and bodies. (2) Access to training and support helps parents learn to devote quality time to helping their children learn. (3) Continuing professional development activities provide teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to teach increasingly diverse young students with a variety of educational, social, and health needs. **The EPSF prekindergarten component for four-year-old children is designed to meet these three national education goals** (Werner, 1994). It includes a standardized instrument for measuring program impact; program-developed authentic assessments of each child's level of performance; guidance for parents and teachers to encourage developmental play activities; professional development resources and a training program; plus strategies for activating family and community support. Program development and evaluation is an arduous task. Adopters and consultants volunteer their efforts to develop and align curricula with assessments to expand the EPSF

4. The Prekindergarten Study is being conducted by Luceille Werner, National Director; Patricia Bryant, National Consultant; Tommie Touchstone, National Consultant; Debbie Davis, Research Assistant; and Paul Thistlethwaite, Ph.D., Statistical Analyst.

program. (See attachments C and D.) As the design of the program takes shape, events follow one another (research and instrumentation, resource development for training, guidance, and implementation by teachers and parents).

The kindergarten program is described in some detail in Part V. It is in kindergarten that the most comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis is conducted on an annual basis.

Longitudinal studies, conducted regularly over a period of three to five years, are currently designed to demonstrate sustained program effects through the primary grades (see Part III). Most developmentally delayed prekindergarten/kindergarten program students demonstrate phenomenal spurts of growth. They enter first grade ready to learn. (Tables 4, 5, and 7 describe positive program outcomes.)

Kindergarten teachers have come to expect a wide developmental age range in their classrooms - - children who are functioning on the level of a two- or three-year-old and children developmentally advanced. (See attachment J.) Primary grade teachers are also beginning to recognize wide developmental age ranges in their classrooms. Trained primary program teachers provide age- and individually-appropriate curricula (1) to meet each child's needs regardless of his or her chronological age or primary grade level; (2) to avoid *promotion* to transitional grades, pull-out programs, and retention; (3) to significantly increase at-risk children's performance levels during their primary grade experiences; and (4) to promote sustained effects throughout each child's intermediate grade experience.

Evaluation reports will be available in 1996 to document the need for the EPSF

holistic approach, prekindergarten through the primary grades, and to demonstrate program impact on student achievement through second grade.

III. **Mixing qualitative and quantitative data is appropriate for ongong student assessment and for measuring the impact of the program on student achievement** (Longitudinal Study Year II, 1993-94). Most researchers underscore the desirability of mixing complementary and congruent qualitative and quantitative methods of evaluation given the strengths and weaknesses found in single method designs. Qualitative methods can play an especially prominent role by eliciting data and suggesting conclusions to which quantitative methods would be blind (Miles, Huberman, 1984). Systematized and careful observations from the program-developed reading and writing checklists enrich teachers' understanding of the process allowing *new dimensions in reading and writing* to emerge. *Research packages* that integrate both qualitative and quantitative data are rare. Mixed data will lead to greater confidence in the generalizability of evaluation results in early childhood education.

Data from the second year of the longitudinal study were compared to assess the question, "Do the results on the Reading Scale compare to those on standardized tests?" Two instruments were administered to collect quantitative data. The Standardized Reading Inventory (SRI) has established reliability and validity and meets all criteria for standardization. It is a criterion-referenced device that can be used to establish an individual's specific level of mastery. It is not norm-referenced. Standards for grade level designations have been established. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT) is norm referenced and meets all criteria for standardization.

It is useful for teachers who wish to know the general level of reading achievement

of individual students.

For the qualitative assessment, the program developed Reading Checklist and Rating Scale was implemented by teachers. Validity studies have not been conducted but a set of administrative procedures and specified guidelines has been established. EPSF National Consultants compared the performance level on the SRI with the grade level on the GMRT and the developmental level according to the Reading Scale (Bryant, 1994). The sample included 198 children from 15 schools in 9 different states. For 66 of the children, there was a correlation on all three instruments. For 68 of the children, there was a correlation between the GMRT and the Rating Scale. For 29 of the children, there was no correlation between the GMRT and the checklist. Correlations were dependent on the recording accuracy of teachers observing. Reading levels on all three instruments were influenced *by a one point difference* in raw scores. While all three instruments were designed to measure progress, the qualitative instrument (Reading Scale) was more indicative of the learning process employed by the child. McKean and Bryant will incorporate these and other findings in the final analysis of mixed data.

IV. **The implementation of key program elements is essential for improved student achievement at adoption sites.** Annually, since 1989, Classroom Monitoring Checklists (of program implementation progress and process reported by adopters participating in the annual studies) have been analyzed along with qualitative and quantitative test data. Which components of the program have been implemented by adopters submitting test results? What kinds of problems are adopters having implementing each component? How have they solved their problems? How might the level of program implementation of individual compo-

nents be affecting their students' scores? A simple tally of data to answer these types of questions yields quantities of usable information for planning program follow-up, refining materials, developing surveys, planning professional seminars, and for evaluating adopter fidelity to key program components to achieve results demonstrated to PEP (1990). For example, parent involvement is one key component of the program. Since the parent letter describing each kindergarten child's strengths and needs is computer-generated, it is easy for teachers to initiate parent conferences using the printout. School-home communication, via Teacher-Parent Activity Cards (T-PAC) and the computer printout, is almost self-implementing and most adopters follow recommendations to use this data for one-on-one parent-teacher conferences early in the school year. Some teachers and administrators believe their home-school communication problems are insurmountable until they receive annual Classroom Monitoring Checklist Reports which demonstrate that schools with similar demographics manage to initiate parent conferences and teacher-guided learning activities at home. (See attachments E and F.)

Data from the Classroom Monitoring Checklists are also valuable for continuing the cyclical program development and evaluation process. Which key elements are not being implemented and why? Are researched components outdated? Do recommended practices reflect *current* needs of children? Is there a need for qualitative as well as quantitative measures of student achievement? Will a more holistic approach to curriculum alignment with assessments from prekindergarten through the primary grades improve student achievement? Based on data from the analysis of checklists and anecdotal information from adopters, the essential components of the program are subjected to ongoing qualitative analysis by program

consultants and adopters at leadership conferences and at staff development workshops. Classroom Monitoring Checklist Reports are a documented source of data to support ongoing program evaluation and development activities to meet the needs of today's children.

V. **Annual statistical analyses of program effects demonstrate improved kindergarten student achievement and reflect reduced retention rates.** Annual studies of at-risk program children's prekindergarten and postkindergarten test scores, when compared with the norms, have demonstrated improved student achievement and reduced retention rates over a period of twenty-three years (EPSF Annual Studies, 1972 to 1995).

Annual research studies by independent evaluators consistently confirm the original EPSF program hypothesis that *kindergarten children who are identified as at-risk (developmentally delayed) will achieve at significantly higher levels with the EPSF program when implemented by carefully trained teachers* (Werner, 1971). Children who continue to function on low developmental levels will benefit from continuation of the age- and individual-appropriate EPSF program through second grade (McKean, 1990). Qualitative and quantitative assessments will demonstrate statistically significant and educationally meaningful gains (Longitudinal Study, 1992-96). The educational needs of all children as early as preschool and through the primary grades are targeted.

Initial EPSF quantitative and qualitative kindergarten assessments do not focus on the importance of understanding print concepts! Each child's developmental level plus educational and social achievements, exposure to social inequities, ethnic background, and family culture is recognized by program teachers involved in

educational planning. Children are not tracked into *at-risk-for-literacy* groups or special need classrooms based on the results of standardized tests.

What is the focus of the EPSF kindergarten program? Trained and updated EPSF teachers help schools get ready for *educational diversity* among young children from *diverse* cultural and experiential backgrounds and with *diverse* learning patterns and *diverse* sociopsycholinguistic abilities. Children are not separated into *prereading, prewriting,* and *formal instruction* groups. Nor are literacy learning opportunities reserved for high achievers. Children are not tracked into *at-risk for literacy* classrooms or groups based on the results of standardized tests. Literacy learning begins naturally in infancy and continues through one's adult life. Literacy development in the EPSF program is viewed as one long continuum of growth from prekindergarten through the primary grades, each child processing information according to his or her unique learning styles, innate abilities, and personal experiences (Werner, 1993).

What is the EPSF kindergarten program? It cannot be contained in a *resource manual.* The program encompasses much more than the tangible items contained in resource kits. Opportunities and options for professional staff development activities to meet teachers needs are paramount.

What do EPSF kindergarten teachers experience at professional workshops conducted by EPSF consultants? Practice in locating materials and implementing appropriate activities; observing and assessing children; using portfolios and making checklists for authentic assessments; interpreting initial quantitative assessments of major developmental performance areas (language, visual, auditory,

fine motor, and gross motor) for educational planning purposes; using computer printouts of each child's learning profile to conference with and teach parents; guiding and supporting educational activities in the community and at home to support child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities in the classroom; developing themes of interest to children; challenging children involved in teacher-initiated whole group or small group instruction; developing theme-related learning center activities; and, most important, observing and encouraging child-initiated activities in school and at home.

What do EPSF teachers learn? EPSF teachers learn how to give children their greatest opportunities to experience success. The EPSF classroom environment focuses on success for each child. EPSF teachers learn how to observe and listen to children in order to facilitate development of curricula that maximize opportunities for each child to construct knowledge from within his or her own experiential background; how children learn basic concepts in the context of a theme topic or unit content; how a child can celebrate his or her diversity; how to create an environment where children can learn to interact in harmony with peers and adults; how children learn to think and to problem-solve. All classroom activities are vehicles for learning literacy in a rich literature-based environment, for developing cognitively and socially, and for finding happiness in success.

What is an EPSF *certified trainer*? Proactive EPSF teachers help to increase the educational effectiveness of the program and control the quality of adoptions. They provide leadership. They organize, guide, and implement organizational movement towards continuous program development and renewal in response to the changing needs of children, teachers, parents, and school administrators. They *get the job*

*done* in their schools, districts, and states.

Luceille Werner, national program director, has developed one of the most successful certified trainer systems in the Network for accomplishing a myriad of interdependent activities in an orderly fashion. Proactive EPSF teachers experience different levels of training to prepare them to disseminate the essential elements of the EPSF program to adopter schools with similar needs in their district, state, or nationwide. Certified trainers have administrative endorsement from their schools or districts to conduct awareness, training, and follow-up EPSF staff development workshops. They are one of the most essential members of the program evaluation team working with students, teachers, parents, EPSF national consultants and national evaluators to train, coordinate, collect data, and prepare data for statistical analysis.

How does EPSF measure kindergarten student success? The major objectives of the study of quantitative kindergarten data collected annually are (1) to determine if moderate-risk and high-risk kindergarten students with identified developmental learning needs will demonstrate statistically significant improved achievement scores on four norm-referenced instruments; (2) to provide for adopting districts summaries of student performance data to assist them to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs and to allow administrators to compare their data with summary student performance data from other participating districts; and (3) for program developers to evaluate program effectiveness to increase student achievement. Over the years, statistically significant gains have been demonstrated consistently in districts with sample sizes ranging from 10 to 500. Table I below describes some demographics for samples of at-risk kindergarten students who participated in

annual studies over the past five years (1990-1995).

**Table 1. Demographics for Kindergarten Samples**

| Year | At-risk Sample Size | Moderate Risk | High Risk | Number of Districts | Number of States |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1990-91 | 4,762 | 2,949 | 1,813 | 61 | 20 |
| 1991-92 | 2,707 | 1,441 | 1,266 | 23 | 13 |
| 1992-93 | 4,616 | 3,030 | 1,586 | 46 | 20 |
| 1993-94 | 4,717 | 2,899 | 1,818 | 48 | 14 |
| 1994-95 | 2,542 | 1,597 | 945 | 34 | 15 |

Generally, the greater the sample size, the smaller the standard error of the mean. The larger samples would be expected to give a truer picture of the population than the smaller samples. For larger samples, analyses are more likely to be accurate and precise. Keeping in mind that while all children in classrooms with EPSF trained teachers benefit from EPSF, the samples of children studied are only those who are described as *at-risk*. Table 2 compares the number of teachers trained and students that participated in the annual study of children at-risk over the past five years to the total number of students that participated in the EPSF kindergarten program:

**Table 2. Comparison of Annual Study Samples with Totals**

| Year | Total Number Students | At-risk Sample Size | Total Number Teachers Trained |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1990-91 | 48,369 | 4,762 | 2,882 |
| 1991-92 | 60,897 | 2,707 | 3,714 |
| 1992-93 | 43,509 | 4,616 | 2,415 |
| 1993-94 | 42,102 | 4,717 | 2,477 |
| 1994-95 | 33,804 (Estimate) | 2,542 (Estimate) | 1,767 (Estimate) |

While representativeness is one of the most important considerations in selecting a sample for EPSF longitudinal studies, *annual study samples occur* based on adopting districts' commitments to submit at-risk students' pretest and posttest educational planning data for statistical analysis. Data is accepted for any and all children functioning one or more years below their developmental age levels (pretest), regardless and not because of their cultural background, ethnic heritage, experiential background, or socioeconomic status (moderate risk, one year, and considerable risk, two or more years based on quantitative data from five standardized instruments administered at the beginning of the kindergarten year). The average chronological age of children at pretest is 65 months, at posttest 74 months. The four largest ethnic groups represented are White, Black, Hispanic, and American Indian. On average, approximately 70% of participating at-risk children are on the lowest socioeconomic level.

Five standardized instruments are administered to all kindergarten children for educational planning purposes. Pretest and posttest scores from four of these instruments are statistically analyzed.

**Table 3. Kindergarten Assessment Instruments**

| | Educational Planning | Statistical Analysis |
|---|---|---|
| Development Test of Visual Motor Integration (VMI) | x | x |
| Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) | x | x |
| Preschool Language Scale (PLS) | x | x |
| EPSF Draw-A-Person (DAP) | x | x |
| Motor Activity Scale (MAS) | x | |

Educational Planning. While quantitative scores from four of the instruments are statistically analyzed, the *initial* assessment results using all five instruments administered prekindergarten and postkindergarten are basic to planning developmentally appropriate experiences, to matching curriculum resources to each child's interests and needs, and to aligning *ongoing qualitative* assessments with curricula. The EPSF curriculum complements the school curriculum. This initial assessment process provides information on (1) the developmental age range of *each* kindergarten student (valid and reliable norm-referenced instruments); (2) what *each* child can do (criterion-referenced items developed by EPSF teachers); and (3) comments and observations from parents and teachers.

The initial assessment data are computerized to provide teachers with a *developmental learning profile* of each child's strengths and needs in seven areas: visual discrimination and memory, auditory, expressive and receptive language, fine motor, and gross motor. From the computer program printouts, teachers generate plans for individualized, small group, and whole group classroom activities; child-initiated and teacher-initiated classroom activities; *plus* teacher-guided family activities using the parent printout and teacher-parent activity cards aligned with the classroom program. After the initial assessment, all ongoing assessments are qualitative until the posttest assessment for statistical analysis. (See attachment J.)

The significance of the posttest results in Table 4 is illuminated by the fact that this is a comparison of *quantitative scores from children at risk! (Qualitative annual data gathering techniques* are discussed on the pages that follow.)

## Table 4. Percentage of Participating Districts Demonstrating Statistically Significant Differences between Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores for Children At-risk

**Age Equivalent Scores**

| | YEAR 1989-90 | | 1990-91 | | 1991-92 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mod. Risk | High Risk | Mod. Risk | High Risk | Mod. Risk | High Risk |
| PLS | 95.1% | 97.6% | 98.9% | 90.0% | 100% | 96% |
| PPVT | 95.0% | 100% | 98.9% | 93.0% | 96% | 100% |
| VMI | 92.5% | 90.2% | 97.0% | 85.0% | 91% | 91% |

(These differences are based on age equivalent scores which represent the raw scores which were typical of children of a particular age group.)

**Standard Score Equivalents**

| | YEAR 1992-93 | | 1993-94 | | 1994-95 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mod. Risk | High Risk | Mod. Risk | High Risk | Mod. Risk | High Risk |
| PLS | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| PPVT | 90% | 93% | 90% | 100% | 93% | 84% |
| DAP | 81% | 83% | 92% | 100% | 77% | 93% |
| VMI | 75% | 88% | 82% | 90% | 83% | 79% |

(These difference scores are based on standard score equivalents which use a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15.)

## Table 5. SSE Means and Difference Scores for the PLS, PPVT, DAP, and VMI

| | PLS | | | PPVT | | | DAP | | | VMI | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 92-93 | 93-94 | 94-95 | 92-93 | 93-94 | 94-95 | 92-93 | 93-94 | 94-95 | 92-93 | 93-94 | 94-95 |
| Pretest Mean | 85 | 83 | 84 | 78 | 76 | 75 | 88 | 98 | 98 | 88 | 89 | 89 |
| Posttest Mean | 104 | 104 | 104 | 86 | 86 | 86 | 111 | 113 | 113 | 95 | 98 | 98 |
| Mean Difference | 20 | 20 | 20 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 15 | 14 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| Sample | 4581 | 4716 | 2542 | 4615 | 4793 | 2541 | 4473 | 4704 | 2539 | 3186 | 4669 | 2493 |

The mean SSE difference scores remain fairly constant for each instrument (Table 5). A comparison of the Classroom Monitoring Checklists from districts that are not experiencing significant improvement often indicates a low implementation level, particularly the parent component. Follow-up staff development workshops for these districts is recommended.

The data summarized on the previous page establishes the fluctuations in mean difference scores demonstrated by districts over the past six years. As program data analysis procedures became more sophisticated (1992-95), standard scores were analyzed rather than age equivalent scores (1989-92) and a fourth instrument (DAP) was added to the analysis. Of course, these instruments do not measure and cannot measure all aspects of a child's linguistic and cognitive domains. They suggest a child's current level of functioning and are used by teachers for educational planning purposes. Age equivalents were the first type of derived scores used in psychometric testing. Standard Score Equivalents have become the traditional favorite for statistical analyses. Standard score equivalents can be added, subtracted, multiplied, or divided. They have the advantage of being equal interval scores.

The annual study provides comprehensive data to appropriately measure at-risk student outcomes. The findings indicate that the program has beneficial outcomes for moderate risk and high risk students of low *socioeconomic* status from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Early Prevention of School Failure responds to many of the current needs of today's children. Changing family structures, increasing numbers of working mothers,

increasing academic demands from schools for early childhood students, greater numbers of parents engaged in substance abuse, increases in neurological and other manifestations of sexually transmitted diseases, retention and transitional classroom school policies, poverty, and cross-cultural school environments all can be problematic. Surely, the most problematic, is poverty. Research tells us that poor children tend to finish last. EPSF recognizes their needs for a developmentally appropriate kindergarten program.

**Table 6. Demographics: Ethnic Background and Socioeconomic Status of At-risk Student Samples 1993-94, 1994-95**

| | 1993-94 | 1994-95 |
|---|---|---|
| **Ethnic Background** | | |
| American Indian | 20% | 26% |
| Asian/Pacific | 2% | 1% |
| Black | 21% | 20% |
| Hispanic | 14% | 14% |
| White | 42% | 39% |
| **Socioeconomic Status** | | |
| Low | 59% | 81% |
| Middle | 32% | 18% |
| Upper | 2% | 1% |

The number of students for whom data is collected is more than adequate for a valid statistical analysis. The gains are not statistically significant simply because of a very large total sample size; the program also demonstrates significant gains in almost every district (small samples ranging from 10-500).

The significance tests test for the significance of the *difference* between pretest and posttest scores, not *gain* scores of *at-risk* students. (It is appropriate to measure program success in terms of *at risk* students rather than the entire population (high, moderate, and average performing students) assessed and participating in the EPSF program.)

Statistical significance tells us that the posttest score was higher than the pretest score. The *effect size* tells us how much of a difference the program is making. In addition to the dependent t-test for significance, an analysis of the size of the increases - - *effect size* - - was calculated for students who participated in the annual study. A pooled standard deviation was computed for (1) the entire sample, (2) high risk, and (3) moderate risk students. Given the nature of the students' risk factor, it would be expected that EPSF at-risk students have less variance in test scores than the norm samples for the instruments. The *effect size* is expressed as a decimal. If the effect size is .50, it means that students average an increase of one-half of a standard deviation between pretest and posttest. In general, an effect size of .33 or higher is considered quite good. Programs for at-risk students should have an effect size of at least .25. The samples of EPSF at-risk program students, who began kindergarten scoring considerably below the mean, demonstrated large effect sizes ranging from .67 to 1.4 at the end of their kindergarten year. The following table shows these outstanding results for kindergarten pretest-posttest difference scores on all four instruments.

**Table 7. Summary of Effect Sizes of At-risk Samples 1992-95**

| | 1992-93 | | | 1993-94 | | | 1994-95 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean Difference | Standard Deviation | Effect Size | Mean Difference | Standard Deviation | Effect Size | Mean Difference | Standard Deviation | Effect Size |
| PLS | 19.5 | 13.7 | **1.45** | 20.2 | 14.4 | **1.4** | 19.5 | 14.2 | **1.4** |
| PPVT | 9.05 | 11.9 | **.77** | 10.1 | 12.6 | **.80** | 10.7 | 13.1 | **.82** |
| DAP | 13.3 | 15.9 | **.84** | 14.5 | 16.6 | **.87** | 13.7 | 17.3 | **.79** |
| VMI | 7.9 | 11.8 | **.67** | 9.0 | 12.5 | **.72** | 9.4 | 12.9 | **.73** |

EPSF at-risk students remain with their peers in regular classrooms unlike students in transitional grades or pull-out programs. Since research demonstrates that being overage for grade level is very highly correlated to eventually dropping out of school, we conclude that EPSF is effective in reducing dropout rates for the at-risk level of students (McKean, 1992).

What are some qualitative measures teachers use in evaluating student progress and program effectiveness? Qualitative evaluation methods give adopters subjective data for analysis of program impact on student achievement, for drawing conclusions, and for verification of significance levels. (1) The adopters' EPSF Classroom Monitoring Checklist Reports give program evaluators and district administrators as well as parents and teachers evidence they need to explain fluctuations in scores from year-to-year. (See attachments E and F.) Some years, adopters report parent involvement is strong. Classroom implementation of essential program components is stronger some years than others. Ongoing professional development with updates on program changes based on early childhood research findings is at a higher level some years than others. These data from kindergarten and first grade

teachers are analyzed, reported, and studied by developers and adopters. (2) The EPSF Developmental Skill Observation Checklist is used to record a child's progress in developing important language and literacy skills in an integrated, holistic process. Theme activities, such as, those in Animals, or language experience activities generated by reading good literature, or drawing pictures and writing stories about a field trip, give teachers opportunities to interact with children as they learn skills. (3) Reading and writing checklists and scales for recording and evaluating progress in social development and learning literacy are other qualitative measures developed by and for EPSF teachers. (See attachments G, H, and I. These are found in the Guidelines for Child's Developmental Progress Portfolio, 1992.) They can be used by prekindergarten, kindergarten, and primary grade teachers who know the importance of tracking social development and emerging literacy skills in young children. Literacy learning is an ongoing process which begins naturally at different ages and different grade levels with different children. For example, in a literacy learning classroom, a young child developing awareness of words observes and processes that the length of the word on a label or list in the classroom or at home has no relationship to the size of the object the word represents; or, that letters, words, and language sounds have connections; or that *reading pictures* is not cheating. A child experiencing these natural benchmarks in learning literacy could be age 4 or 7, could be in kindergarten or a primary grade. EPSF recognizes that each child's literacy development process is unique. (Literacy Learning, 1995).

Summative qualitative measures of a child's progress are used by program developers to measure student progress and program effectiveness in EPSF longitudinal studies. For the unbiased teacher and parent, they are used on an

ongoing basis to draw valid meaning, rich descriptions and explanations of how a child learns, and vivid chronological inferences in a local context for educational planning.

Collecting and analyzing qualitative data is labor intensive. Further development, testing, and elaboration of procedures will make these data a more useful, coherent resource for evaluators conducting annual studies.

Annual research studies by independent evaluators consistently confirm the original hypothesis (Werner, 1971) that kindergarten children who are identified as *at-risk* will reap social and cultural benefits from the EPSF program when implemented by specially trained teachers and will achieve at significant levels. Children who continue to function on low developmental levels will benefit from EPSF follow-up activities in first and second grade, will demonstrate statistically significant and educationally meaningful differences, and will catch up to their peers in second grade (McKean, 1990).

Migrant Study. The annual study of children of migrant workers is unique. A summer program is sponsored by a state grant to meet the diverse educational needs of children of migrant workers in the state of Illinois (Special Education Needs of Migratory Children and Prekindergarten Program for Children At-risk of Academic Failure). The statistical outcomes of these studies are derived from the results of each child's performance on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, the Test De Vocabulario En Imagenes Peabody, the Preschool Language Scale, and the Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration. The average posttest mean scores for the four different instruments administered at 14 sites to 256 students

were statistically significantly greater than the average pretest means (Thistlethwaite, 1994). The most valuable tool for this program is the computer printout of each child's developmental profile compared to four national norm groups, responses to criterion-referenced items on *what each child can do*, plus observations and background information from parents. This is probably the most comprehensive data ever *assembled*, *used* by teachers and parents in the program, and *used* by the state as transitional records for follow-up of migratory children at-risk.

The following pages are charts describing the program's (A) Holistic Approach to Program Implementation and Evaluation, (B) Permanent Transition Records for Learner-Centered Schools, (C) Linking Developmental Program Assessments, (D) Framework for Dovetailing Children's Assessments, (E) Kindergarten, and (F) First Grade Classroom Monitoring Checklists. (G) EPSF Reading Checklist and Rating Scale, (H) EPSF Standards and Descriptors to Assist Teachers Assessing Writing Progress, (I) EPSF Writing Checklist and Rating Scale, and (J) a Student Profile (computer-generated). The concepts encompassed in these monographs offer an exemplary framework for reaching a common goal: all children entering school will be ready to learn.

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## PRODUCT DESCRIPTORS

The following instructional guides, training manuals, curriculum materials, and assessments are products of On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) Educational Program Publications. (Peotone, Illinois 60468-956.) (Telephone 1-800-933-3478. Fax 1-708-258-3484.)

**Awareness and Overview**
Awareness Brochures and Samples of Documents for Assessment, Curriculum Development, Teacher-initiated Instruction, Parent Involvement, and Evaluation
Prekindergarten, Kindergarten, Primary Grades Awareness and Overview of Assessments and Developmental Curricula: Video
Kindergarten and First Grade Programs: Video

**Assessments** (Instruments, Manuals, Manipulatives, and Activities) (Program Developed and Standardized)
Individual Developmental Early Assessment (I.D.E.A.) Kit (Prekindergarten and Early Kindergarten)
Preschool Language Scale (PLS) Kit (Age 4.5 to 6.5) (Standardized)
Motor Activity Scale (MAS) (Ages 4.5 to 6.5) (Standardized)
EPSF Draw•A•Person (DAP) (age 4.5 to 6.5) (Standardized)
Assessment Activities Notebook (Kindergarten and Early Primary Grades)
Developmental Program Portfolio Guide (Kindergarten and Primary Grades)

**Computer Programs with Manuals for Assessment** (Educational Planning and Program Evaluation)
Macintosh Computer Program for Scoring and Interpretation with Teacher Training Manual
IBM Computer Program for Scoring and Interpretation with Teacher Training Manual
Apple Computer Program for Scoring and Interpretation with Teacher Training Manual

**Curriculum Development and Planning Guides for Prekindergarten, Kindergarten, and Primary Grade Classroom Teachers**
Prekindergarten Curriculum Resource Kit with Teacher Training Manual
Individual Developmental Early Assessment Kit with Teacher Training Manual for Prekindergarten Program
Integrated Curriculum Resources for a Risk-free Environment Kindergarten Kit with Teacher Training Manual
On the Way to SUCCESS Kit with Teacher Training Manual for Primary Grades
Literacy Learning in Kindergarten and Primary Grade Classrooms with Resource Guide
Teacher-Parent Activity Cards (T-PAC)
*Me, Color, Weather, Animals* and *Myself* Integrated Themes and Unit Planning Models
Literature Activities for Creative and Critical Thinking (Activity Folders for 17 Tradebooks)

**Parent Involvement, Home and School Connections**
Parent Module with Calendar and Booklets Involving Parents in Classroom Activities (Colored Slides)
Fun Activities for Young Children (Parent Guide)
Parent Teacher: Keys to Success
Recipes for Homemade Teaching Materials
Teacher-Parent Activity Cards (T-PAC)

## EPSF STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Early Prevention of School Failure Awareness Workshop
Prekindergarten Teacher Training Workshop
Kindergarten Teacher Training Workshop
On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing Workshop for Primary Grade Teachers
Advanced Workshop for Kindergarten and Primary Grade Teachers
Authentic Assessment Workshop for Primary Grade Teachers
Creative and Critical Thinking Skills Workshop for Kindergarten and Primary Grade Teachers
Literacy Learning Workshop for Kindergarten and Primary Grade Teachers
Learning Center Workshop for Kindergarten and Primary Grade Teachers
Leadership Seminar for EPSF Certified Trainers

## A. Holistic Approach to Program Implementation and Evaluation

| | Assessment | Curriculum | Monitoring | Transitions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Prekindergarten:** Model for Technical Assistance to Pre-kindergarten Teachers, Administrators | I.D.E.A. assessment of child's developmental level for educational planning purposes | Resources for children's thinking and learning | Ongoing authentic assessments, observations, charting, identifying and meeting needs, summative evaluation | Transitional written records: teacher/ parent observations, health center records, etc. |
| **Kindergarten: Early Prevention of School Failure Program** | Initial assessment (standardized battery of instruments) for educational planning purposes | Integrated literature-based learning activities for direct instruction with reading tapes, writing samples and skill evaluation | Ongoing authentic assessments, charting progress, identifying and meeting needs, summative evaluation | Transitional written records: portfolio, normed prepost test battery profile, parent/teacher observations, etc. |
| **First Grade: On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing Program** | Reading and Writing checklist, teacher conferences, parent conferences, authentic assessments to plan educational program | Literature-based age- and individual-appropriate developmental program curriculum, plus school curriculum with adaptations | Ongoing authentic assessments, charting progress, identifying and meeting needs, summative evaluation | Transitional written records: portfolio, standardized test results, parent/teacher observations, etc. |
| **Second Grade:** Model for Technical Assistance to Second Grade Teachers, Administrators | Reading and Writing checklist, teacher conferences, parent conferences, authentic assessments to plan educational program | Integrated literature-based and school curriculum with adaptations to meet individual needs, interests, etc. | Ongoing authentic assessments, charting progress, identifying and meeting needs, summative evaluation | Transitional written records: portfolio, standardized test results, parent/teacher observations, etc. |

The program's holistic approach to successful staff development for K-1 program adopters engaged in school improvement processes encourages interrelationships among preschool caregivers and public school prekindergarten, kindergarten, first and second grade teachers. *Technical assistance* and *program developed models* are available to teachers and administrators *aligning program innovations*, transitional records, staff development opportunities, literature-based curricula, and assessments from prekindergarten, through kindergarten, first and second grade.



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## B. Permanent Transition Records for Learner-Centered Schools

### Written Transition Records for Learner-Centered Schools

| 1. Transition | 2. Written Record |
|---|---|
| a. Home to School. (age 4,5,6...) Permanent Record. (3 pages) | The Parent Observation form in lay language provides for schools a developmental physical, emotional, and social history. It may be completed by the parent or teacher interviewing a parent (Parent Observation Form). |
| b. Preschool to School K-3. (Age 4,5,6...) Permanent Record. (2 pages) | Critical, observable, developmental benchmarks reviewed and assessed periodically to measure a child's progress toward learning to read and to write: visual, listening, language, and motor development. (Preacademic Developmental Skill Checklist) |
| c. Kindergarten to First/Second Grade. (Age 4.5-6.5 Permanent Record. (1 page) | A computer-generated (printouts for parents and teachers) developmental profile based on results of the *program's* standardized assessment battery, criterion-referenced items, and teacher observations *preprogram* (and, again, post K *program).* (Diagnostic *preprogram* Student Profile) (Pretest Posttest Comparison Report) |
| d. School to Home. K (Age 4.5 to 6.5) (1 page and 2 pages) | Computer-generated. Two parent letters (printouts) suggesting activities parents can do at home to meet children's developmental needs while capitalizing on strengths in listening, language, visual, and motor development. The letters include *preprogram* and *postprogram* student profiles based on results of K *preprogram* and *postprogram* assessments. It is not recommended that parent letters (printouts) be sent home with a child nor mailed. They are part of the teacher-parent interview process.<br>[*Preprogram* Parent Information (2 pages)]<br>[*Postprogram* Pretest Posttest Comparison Report (1 page)] |
| e. Kindergarten to First Grade. First Grade to Second Grade. School to Home. (Permanent Record) | For children (1)developing strategies for making sense of print; (2)beginning to work in content areas; (3)progressing through a literature-based program for language, listening, reading, writing, and applying thinking skills; (4)beginning to write and to read aloud; (5)understanding, evaluating, and appreciating meaning in what they write, read, hear, see, or feel; (6)learning English as a second language; (7)conferencing with emphasis on minimal teacher control and maximum student responsibility; (8)keeping a portfolio of work samples; (9)evaluating their portfolio of work samples; and (10)for teachers beginning to evaluate children's portfolios. *Program-developed* guidelines and forms or checklists for recording observations, diagnosing, providing structure, tracking progress, and building skills across time have been developed for teachers to adopt or adapt (Guidelines for Child's Developmental Progress Portfolio.) |
| f. First Grade to Second Grade. (Permanent Record) | Preacademic Developmental Skill Checklist, Computer Printouts of Preprogram and Postprogram Assessment Results, Portfolio Checklists and/or Exhibits Demonstrating Achievement. |

## C. Linking Developmental Program Assessments

### On the Way to SUCCESS with Early Prevention of School Failure

**Linking Developmental Program Components with Initial and Ongoing Observation of Each Child's Performance**

**Evaluating Program Impact on Student Learning**

**Individual Developmental Early Assessment: 3 and 4 Year Olds**
Ongoing Assessment of Integrative Developmental Behaviors for Educational Planning

| ←Psychomotor→ | | ←Cognitive→ | | | ←Affective→ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ←Gross Motor→ | ←Fine Motor→ | ←Language→ Receptive Expressive | ←Auditory→ Memory Discrimination | ←Visual→ Memory Discrimination | ←Personal→ (self-help) | ←Interactional→ (social) |

**Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) Assessment Battery: 4, 5 and 6 Year Olds**
Initial and Ongoing Assessment of Integrative Developmental Behaviors for Educational Planning

| ←Psychomotor→ | | ←Cognitive→ | | | ←Affective→ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ←Gross Motor→ | ←Fine Motor→ | ←Language→ Receptive Expressive | ←Auditory→ Memory Discrimination | ←Visual→ Memory Discrimination | ←Personal→ (self-help) | ←Interactional→ (social) |

**On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing Authentic Portfolio Assessment: At-risk children after Kdg.**
Ongoing Assessment of Integrative Developmental Behaviors for Educational Planning

| ←Psychomotor→ | | ←Cognitive→ | | | ←Affective→ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ←Gross Motor→ | ←Fine Motor→ | ←Language→ Receptive Expressive | ←Auditory→ Memory Discrimination | ←Visual→ Memory Discrimination | ←Personal→ (self-help) | ←Interactional→ (social) |

## A Framework for Dovetailing Children's Assessments

Developmental Benchmarks to Age 4
Prekindergarten Initial and Ongoing Assessment of All Children
Kindergarten Initial and Ongoing Assessment of All Children
First Grade Initial and Ongoing Assessment of Children At-risk
Primary Grade Ongoing Assessments

## E. Kindergarten Classroom Monitoring Checklist

### *On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with EARLY PREVENTION OF SCHOOL FAILURE*
### KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM MONITORING CHECKLIST
### Self-evaluation of Fidelity to Key Program Components

The following Kindergarten Classrom Monitoring Checklist will assist the district in determining program fidelity. Adaptation of certain elements is expected in order to personalize the program and allow the district to have ownership. However, key components must be in place in order to maintain the program philosophy and goals. Please use this checklist to evaluate your program.

Name of Elementary School _____ Total # of Classrooms Monitored _____ # Kindergarten _____ # Other_____

Address _____

School District _____ Contact Person _____ Date Completed _____

Please respond "yes" when the specific task is completed. Use "partial" when the task is partially, but not totally implemented. "No" refers to the task not being done. Please note a reason for a "no" or "partial" response under "comments."

| SIX ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS | Yes | Partial | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Team Assessment of Kindergarten Children.** The team (including the classroom teacher) assesses each child's developmental level using outcomes of norm-referenced tests; responses to criterion-referenced items; teachers' and specialists' observations; and background information from parents and other sources. | | | | |
| **2. Team Conferencing.** All team members conference on each child to determine child's performance level on the On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing - EPSF developmental continuum. Computerized staffing reports include Student Profile, Class Grid, Parent Letter, all helpful for educational planning. | | | | |
| **3. Classroom Learning Environment.** Structure - Classroom facilities and centers are organized to provide a risk-free learning environment for all children. | | | | |
| Climate - The success cycle is encouraged with appropriate materials for developing academic, social, physical and emotional maturity, and flexible time for mastery of skills. Children learn to work independently, at centers, and with the whole class, in success oriented literature-based reading and writing activities. | | | | |
| **4. Educational Planning for Children with Similar Needs.** A. Teacher understands the skill continuum for language, auditory, visual, fine and gross motor development for kindergarten children | | | | |
| B. Small Group Instruction - The teacher uses standardized assessment outcomes plus observations to group children with similar needs for direct instruction in concrete, semiconcrete, and abstract levels 10-20 minutes during the day. | | | | |
| C. Curriculum Planning - EPSF Training and Resource Handbooks are used to plan, facilitate, and monitor self-initiated and self-directed learning experiences for children with similar needs. Curriculum activity guides and T-PAC activity cards are used by participants to plan appropriate activities. | | | | |
| D. Curriculum Implementation - Teacher directed instruction, independent practice, whole group literature based reading and writing activities, and student-initiated learning activities. | | | | |
| E. Resource Help - Professionals, parents, and/or students are trained to assist the teacher working with the program. | | | | |
| **5. Parent Involvement.** Parents are actively involved with their child in program activities including parent orientation, support for the instructional program at home and in school, and program-related communication with members of the school community. | | | | |
| **6. Evaluation.** A. Student Evaluation - Teachers (1) keep student portfolios with the On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing - EPSF Developmental Checklist, observations of emerging reading behaviors, and samples of child's writing; (2) posttest using EPSF battery of five instruments | | | | |
| B. Program Evaluation . (1) The assessment team posttests those students observed performing considerably below chronological age level and those who were involved in teacher-directed activities during the school term. Norm-referenced tests; responses to criterion-referenced items; teachers' and specialists' observations; and parent information are used by the teacher and specialist assessment team. | | | | |
| (2) Program effectiveness is evaluated and goals are set for next year's assessment, conferencing, implementation, and evaluation activities. | | | | |
| (3) Program administrators and implementors assess degree of fidelity to the six essential elements of the kindergarten program using this checklist. | | | | EPSF 6/92 |



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## F. First Grade Classroom Monitoring Checklist

### On The Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing Monitoring Checklist

**A Second Year with Early Prevention of School Failure**
**Self-evaluation of Fidelity to Key Program Components**

The following Classroom Monitoring Checklist will assist educators in determining program fidelity. Key components must be in place in order to maintain the program philosophy and goals. Please use this checklist to evaluate your SUCCESS program implementation.

Name of Elementary School _____ Total # of Classrooms Monitored _____ # Kindergarten _____
# First Grade _____ # Other_____

Address _____

School District _____ Contact Person _____ Date Completed _____

Please respond "yes" when the specific task is completed. Use "partial" when the task is partially, but not totally implemented. "No" refers to the task not being done. Please note a reason for a "no" or "partial" response under "comments."

| SIX ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS | Yes | Partial | No | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. **End of Kindergarten Evaluation** (including K and Grade 1 classroom teachers) Review results of EPSF kindergarten prepost assessment, teacher observations of child's progress on EPSF developmental continuum, student checklist, and portfolios. | | | | |
| 2. **Team Conferencing.** All team members conference on each at-risk child to determine developmental needs and make recommendations for educational services. | | | | |
| 3. **Classroom Learning Environment** | | | | |
| A. Classroom is organized for a risk-free learning environment for all children; student-centered learning experiences; and provides extended unit and thematic practice following direct teaching. Materials and facilities are organized for easy access by children and teacher. | | | | |
| B. The success cycle is encouraged with appropriate materials and flexible time for academic, social, physical, and emotional development. Children learn to work independently, at centers, and with the whole class in success-oriented literature-based reading and writing activities. | | | | |
| 4. **Educational Planning** | | | | |
| A. Skill Continuum for Child Growth and Development Understood Program implementor demonstrates thorough knowledge of a developmental continuum and integrated developmental reading and writing program. | | | | |
| B. Teacher-directed Instruction of Children with Similar Skill Needs 20-30 minutes daily instruction of developmental concepts on concrete, semi-concrete, and abstract levels using teacher observation checklist. | | | | |
| C. Curriculum Planning SUCCESS (and EPSF) Training and Resource Handbooks, Teacher-Parent Activity Cards and SUCCESS Activity Cards are used to plan, facilitate, and monitor reading and writing centers; higher order thinking skills; literature, themes, and child-initiated activities. | | | | |
| D. Curriculum Implementation Teacher directed instruction; independent practice; whole group literature-based reading and writing activities and student initiated learning activities. | | | | |
| E. Resource Help Professionals, parents, and/or students are trained to assist the teacher in providing appropriate learning experiences for all children. | | | | |
| 5. **Parent Involvement** Parents are actively involved in program activities, including parent orientation, support for the instructional program at home and in school, and program-related communication with members of the school community. | | | | |
| 6. **Evaluation** | | | | |
| A. Student Evaluation. Teachers record the child's progress on SUCCESS Teacher Observation Checklist; assess progress using children's Reading and Writing Portfolio Checklists. | | | | |
| B. Program Evaluation | | | | |
| 1. The unit team posttests identified program students using the Gates-McGinitie Reading Test (or other reading test) to determine statistical educational significance of student gains. | | | | |
| 2. Program effectiveness is evaluated and goals are set for next year's assessment, conferencing, implementation, and evaluation activities. | | | | |
| 3. Program administrators and implementors assess degree of fidelity to the six essential elements of the SUCCESS program using this checklist. | | | | |

SUCCESS 9/92



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## G. EPSF Reading Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale

As *nonreaders* become *readers*, changes occur in children's concepts about print. The EPSF Reading Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale is designed to monitor these changes over a period of time. It is more than an assessment instrument; it is a valuable guide for teachers.

Before beginning careful systematic observations of each child's progress, teachers become thoroughly familiar with each of the items on the checklist. Periodically they present assessment tasks in a standard situation where they can observe but be unobtrusive. It is recommended that teachers use the checklist weekly to monitor an individual child's progress during one or more self-directed activities.

To administer this checklist, teacher's observe six chronological steps emerging readers commonly take to become independent readers. Children set their own pace. There is no time limit. Performance items are not necessarily sequential. At the end of each marking period, teachers analyze and process their observations from the checklist plus any other authentic assessments they used. At the end of each grade, standardized reading tests can be correlated with meaningful qualitative assessment ratings to verify, draw conclusions, describe, and explain each child's reading progress. (This checklist is one of many in the EPSF Guidelines for Child's Developmental Progress Portfolio.)

The format of the one-page checklist is designed to *guide* teachers observing children using any or all of thirty-four strategies commonly employed by children in the process of learning to read. The strategies are arranged in six categories (Column I, A through F). The checklist is open-ended with space on each level for teachers' comments (Column I). A child may employ reading strategies on more than one level (Column I). Teachers record the date they observed a child's performance on a self-directed activity (Column II). Following is an excerpt from the checklist to illustrate the format:

### Reading Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale

| Rating/Categories | Date | Date | Strategies/Performance Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Early Emergent Reader<br>Teacher Comments | | | |
| B. Advanced Emergent Reader<br>Teacher Comments | | | Engages in pretend reading of text.<br>Clearly approximates book language when engaged in pre-tend-reading (familiar and predictable language patterns).<br>Demonstrates understanding of meaning of story being read (picture and dramatization).<br>Draws upon predictable language patterns from book to anticipate and recall events in story when dramatizing and retelling.<br>Recognizes difference between a letter and a word.<br>Demonstrates left to right movement.<br>Has a beginning sense of one-to-one correspondence of printed word to spoken word. |
| C. Early Beginning Reader<br>Teacher Comments | | | |
| D. Advanced Beginning Reader<br>Teacher Comments | | | |
| E. Early Independent Reader<br>Teacher Comments | | | |
| F. Advanced Independent Reader<br>Teacher Comments | | | |

6/94



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**On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure**

## Directions for Recording*

### SUCCESS Writing Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale
### A Rating Technique for an Inventory of Children's Writing Samples

Collect and assess three portfolio writing samples on three consecutive days for three successive weeks. Do this during the first part of the school year; at the end of the second marking period or the end of the first semester; and near the end of the school year.

Use the samples for documenting progress, problems, change. What was the child's language level when he or she first entered school? The ability of the child to communicate? Did the child demonstrate directional strategies? Interdependence between reading and writing? How many words were in the child's writing vocabulary? In Column I, there is space to record your observations; in Column II, ***date*** and compare performance child demonstrates as he or she progresses from category A through F. Use your notes as a guide for educational planning. To assess the at risk child's writing progress, use the third group of portfolio samples ***collected over a period of three successive weeks coinciding with the administration of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (or district-mandated reading test) and the SUCCESS Reading Portfolio Checklist.***

In other words, select a three-week period near the end of the school year to collect writing samples and assess reading progress. Administer a standardized reading test to all students at risk over a period of one week at the end of this three-week period. Score the Gates-MacGinitie (or district-mandated test); complete the SUCCESS Reading Portfolio Checklist and the Writing Portfolio Checklist; complete a Classroom Monitoring Checklist; and staple together. Summarize these data on the SUCCESS Data Collection form and mail to SUCCESS-EPSF Program Evaluation Study, PO Box 956, Peotone, Illinois 60468.

Thank you. We will send you a report of our findings for your information, for parents, school administrators, and other involved members of your school community.

*This rating procedure using the EPSF Writing Checklist and Rating Scale on the preceding page was implemented for the EPSF Longitudinal Study (1992-96). The writing checklist can be found in the EPSF Guidelines for Child's Developmental Progress Portfolio.



SUCCESS 4/92

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## On the Way to SUCCESS with Early Prevention of School Failure

## I. Writing Portfolio Checklist and Rating Scale*

| Rating/Categories | Date | Date | Strategies/Performance Observed |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Early Emergent Writer<br>Teacher Comments | | | Demonstrates an awareness of signs in environment.<br>Interested in what words "say."<br>Enjoys stories, understands meaning of story.<br>Interested in drawing pictures.<br>Makes scribbles.<br>Attempts to write random letters. |
| B. Advanced Emergent Writer<br>Teacher Comments | | | |
| C. Early Beginning Writer<br>Teacher Comments | | | |
| D. Advanced Beginning Writer<br>Teacher Comments | | | |
| E. Early Independent Writer<br>Teacher Comments | | | |
| F. Advanced Independent Writer<br>Teacher Comments | | | Writes extensively without difficulty arranging or spacing letters, words, or paragraphs.<br>Successfully composes a message. 6/94 |

**Student's Name** _____ **Name of School** _____

| Year | Teacher | Year | Teacher |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

* From Guidelines for Child's Developmental Progress Portfolio. Illinois: On the Way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure.



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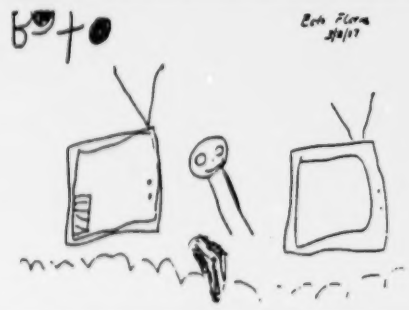
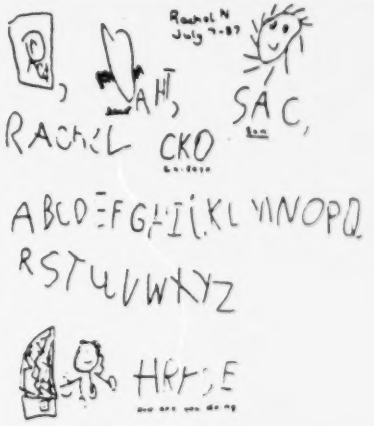
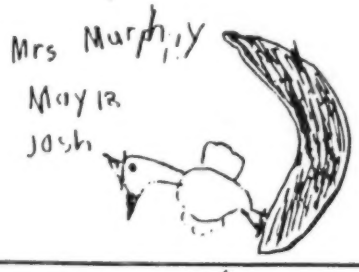
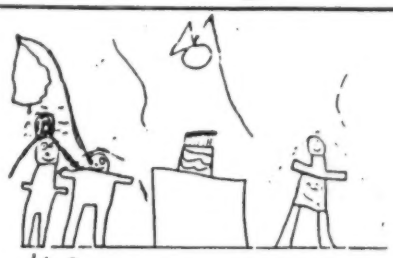
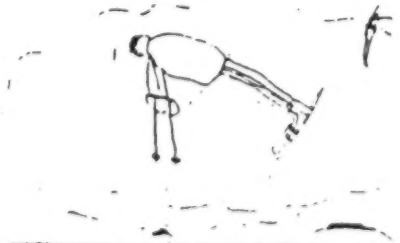
## H. EPSF Standards and Descriptors to Assist Teachers Assessing Writing Progress

### On the Way to SUCCESS with Early Prevention of School Failure
### NATIONAL WRITING STUDY*

| Kdg | 1st | Descriptors | Samples |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5% | | **LEVEL 1**<br>• Draws pictures.<br>• Makes scribbles or draws symbols.<br>• Attempts to write name. |  |
| 57% | 2% | **LEVEL 2**<br>• Writes part or all of the alphabet.<br>• Demonstrates left to right directional pattern.<br>• Copies print from the environment.<br>• Strings random letters.<br>• Writes any word.<br>• Writes some sight words correctly, but unable to identify any phonetic knowledge. | |
| 22% | | **LEVEL 3**<br>• Attempts to connect beginning sound with letter. May use one letter spelling I cah (I see a house.)<br>• Uses labels that indicate some phonetic sound relationship.<br>• Writes some recognizable words that have a sound letter relationship.<br>• Writes a group of words.<br>• Writing corresponds with picture.<br>• Writes some capital and some lower case letters. |  |
| 10% | 3% | **LEVEL 4**<br>• Has a beginning sense of one-to-one correspondence of written word to spoken word.<br>• Begins to connect initial and final word sound with letter sound.<br>• Expresses idea in simple sentence.<br>• Spaces words.<br>• Uses conventional spelling for a few high frequency words. | |

* See following page.

| Kdg | 1st | Descriptors | Samples |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6% | 16% | **LEVEL 5**<br>• May use two and three letter spelling..<br>• Attempts to use vowel sounds.<br>• Increased correct spelling of high frequency words.<br>• Uses period correctly sometimes.<br>• Uses some capital letters at beginning of sentences.<br>• Beginning to use question mark correctly. | Dul uv the earth a duck play on the port uv the moon<br>  <br>Mrs Murphy<br>May 18<br>Josh |
| | 66% | **LEVEL 6**<br>• Writes more complex sentences.<br>• Spells over one-half of words correctly.<br>• Writes two or more related sentences. |  <br>We are at my<br>birthday Party today.<br>We have fun. |
| | 13% | **LEVEL 7**<br>• Writes three or more sentences that tell a story.<br>• Uses punctuation correctly.<br>• Uses capitals at beginning of sentences. |  <br>I'm Skiing in a Ski Race<br>I'm in fearst Plase. I Jast<br>Jumt over the biJist Jump<br>in the World. |
| | | **Samples from Gifted Kindergarten Class**<br>• Has definite beginnings and endings.<br>• Has logical organization.<br>• Uses more descriptive words.<br>• Creates and solves problems.<br>• Includes three or more sentences in stories.<br><br>**BEST COPY AVAILABLE** | One Day mother Poor Baby deer but she is not sad<br>So she went to look for a present and she saw raw fruit that had in it<br>fruits. She with nothing<br>But as she was a mas<br>she was in the mas. But<br>She had Dubble<br>and that was home. |

* Selected summary data from on the way to SUCCESS in Reading and Writing with Early Prevention of School Failure national writing study conducted in nine schools in seven states.

## J. Student Profile (computer-generated)

Sample Teacher Pretest Report

# TEAM CONFERENCING

EPSF DIAGNOSTIC STUDENT PROFILE
Chatham

STUDENT NAME: Sarah Moyer
DOB: 8/15/86
CHRONOLOGICAL AGE: 5-1

TEACHERS NAME: Mrs. Lewis
TEST DATE: 9/1/91

| | RL | EL | AD | VM | VD | FM | GM. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Considerably Above Age Level | . | . | X | . | . | . | . |
| Moderately Above Age Level | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |
| Expected Age Level | . | X | . | . | . | . | X |
| Moderately Below Age Level | X | . | . | X | X | X | . |
| Considerably Below Age Level | . | . | . | . | . | . | . |

RL = Receptive Language
EL = Expressive Language
AD = Auditory
VM = Visual Memory
VD = Visual Discrimination
FM = Fine Motor
GM = Gross Motor

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE: Scored moderately below age level
EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE: Scored at expected age level
AUDITORY: Scored considerably above age level
VISUAL MEMORY: Scored moderately below age level
VISUAL DISCRIMINATION: Scored moderately below age level
FINE MOTOR: Scored moderately below age level
GROSS MOTOR: Scored at expected age level

Teachers' and Specialists' Observations of Child's Responses:

ARTICULATION: Clear
HEARING: Passed
VISION: Passed

Sarah was able to identify the following colors: red blue green orange yellow white (PLS)
Sarah was able to identify the following shapes: triangle circle (PLS)
Sarah could count to 9 in one-to-one correspondence. (PLS)
Sarah was able to print her name. (DAP)
Lateral dominance was as follows: FOOT = R HAND = L EYE = R (MAS)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| PLS observations: | Followed three auditory and two visual directions | Good listening skills |
| PPVT observations: | Slow to respond | Repeated word |
| VMI observations: | Task difficult | Switched hands |
| DAP observations: | Poor pencil grip | Few details |
| MAS observations: | Good balance and dexterity | Knows right and left |

RESULTS:

PPVT = 4 - 3 VMI = 3 - 11 DAP = 4 - 0 MAS = E
PLS I = MB PLS II = MA PLS III = CA PLS IV = E PLS V = MB

CA=Considerably Above Age Level MA=Moderately Above Age Level E=Expected Age Level
MB=Moderately Below Age Level CB=Considerably Below Age Level



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